

## **NATIONAL PROVIDER IDENTIFIER (NPI)**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) along with its National Provider Identifier (NPI) enumeration contractor, Fox Systems, is pleased to announce the availability of a new identifier for use in the standard electronic health care transactions. The NPI will be the single provider identifier, replacing the different provider identifiers you currently use. Implementation of the NPI is an Administrative Simplification process of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

Health care providers may begin applying for their NPI numbers electronically on May 23, 2005 or may submit a paper application beginning this summer. The health plans with whom you do business will instruct you as to when you may begin using the NPI in standard transactions. All HIPAA covered entities except small health plans must begin using the NPI on May 23, 2007; small health plans have until May 23, 2008. For additional information, and to complete an application, visit <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> on the web.

Also, an instructional web tool, called the NPI Viewlet, is now available for viewing at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/npi/npiviewlet.asp> and under "HIPAA Latest News" at [www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2) on the CMS website. This tool provides an overview of the NPI, a walkthrough of the application, as well as live links to the NPPES website where the learner can apply for an NPI. This tool is designed for all health care providers. In the near future, you will also be able to access the viewlet at <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> on the web.